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ABSTRACT

The College of Southern Idaho, a two-year, institute of higher education (IHE), and the College of Education at Idaho State University, a four-year IHE, have joined together to create a model to ensure that aspiring teachers have the same opportunities for a quality education no matter where they complete their first 2 years. The institutions have developed a workable system for helping students meet the requirements for becoming effective beginning teachers. This model includes an articulated, standards-based curriculum for both campuses; common assessment procedures that center around the performance of candidates; resident faculty members from the four-year campus working on the two-year campus; and cooperative implementation of professional development sites in the service region of the two-year institution. One of the most important factors in the success of this partnership is the open communication between the two parties. Administrators and faculty from both institutions meet on a regular basis. Students from the community college are viewed as equal to students on the home campus. The dean, other administrators, advisors, faculty, and others make regular visits to the community college to help develop a sense of community with the students. (SM)

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Shared Responsibility for Recruiting and Retaining Caring and Competent Teachers: Collaboration and cooperation between a two-year IHE and a four-year IHE

A shortage of caring and qualified teachers appears to be imminent in many areas of the country that have been largely unaffected by recent trends. Idaho is one of those states soon to be affected by the shortage of teachers. While schools, colleges, and departments of education (SCDE) have made strong commitments to meeting the needs of regional LEAs, a quality teacher education preparation program is often unavailable in isolated, rural regions that are many miles from a four year IHE. While advances in distance education have made access easier for these students, the relative isolation often makes this an impractical solution.

Community Colleges have provided support to many persons residing in these regions, but they have been only able to provide a limited amount of preparation that will lead to eventual licensure. In addition, these community colleges are required to prepare students for transfer to a variety of four year programs. Thus, cooperation and collaboration initiatives often meet with resistance and prove to not be viable alternatives to current practices. The advent of Title II reporting requirements, the need for many more highly trained and quality teachers in the future, and an increasing emphasis of enrollment management has necessitated a careful examination of transfer programs.

In addition to developing cooperative programs for recruiting and retaining beginning teachers, it has become apparent that it is necessary to work with teachers, administrators, business persons, state board members, legislators, and others in raising the status of teachers in rural communities. Too often educators have been viewed less than favorably in rural areas and have been subject to continued criticism in the media.

The literature related to cooperation and collaboration between two-year and four-year

institutions has often related to economic development issues. The literature has also examined both social and academic effects of transfer on students. A sparseness exists relative to the development of 2+2 programs for the preparation of teachers. However, teacher educators can learn from other programs that have created workable and working models of collaboration.

Spaulding (2000) defined articulation as "A systematic coordination between educational institutions and agencies designed to ensure the efficient and effective movement of students among these institutions and agencies, while guaranteeing the students' continuous advance in learning." While this reflects a "registrar view" of articulation issues, it raises questions regarding the appropriate preparation program for beginning teachers. Effective articulation agreements provide for the transfer of general education course work and other lower division work. Students do have the ability to transfer seamlessly between institutions, but it has been relatively impossible to tie the conceptual framework for teacher preparation at a four-year institution to the initial two years at a community college. There is little evidence that articulation agreements between two-year and four-year institutions are providing opportunities for students to effectively transition into the teacher education program.

Hollander (2000) provided the following essential elements for the development of exemplary partnerships: analysis of the current environment, knowledge of the benefits of the partnership, commitment of the administration, defining of priorities, engagement of constituents, and the facilitating of communication. As institutions set about the development of partnerships to meet the growing need for high-quality beginning teachers, these elements must be carefully considered and incorporated into the planning.

Hollander (2000) also projected potential outcomes for effective articulation planning

including: the development of a fluid curriculum from the first year to the last year, shortening of the time to degree because of effective articulation, and better communication between faculty. As institutions enter into the development and implementation of articulation for the preparation of beginning teachers, a careful examination of the potential outcomes and benefits is imperative.

The College of Southern Idaho (a community college in Twin Falls, ID) and the College of Education at Idaho State University have joined together to create a new vision and implement a new methodology to assure that those students planning to become teachers have the same opportunities no matter where they complete the first two years. Through strong, open communication relative to issues around the effective preparation of beginning teachers, these two institutions have developed a strong model for effective cooperation and collaboration. The institutions have developed a workable system for assisting students in meeting the requirements for becoming effective beginning teachers. Among the various components of the model are: articulated, standards-based curriculum; common assessment procedures centered around the performance of candidates; resident faculty members from the four-year institution on the two-year campus; cooperative implementation of professional development sites in the service region of the two-year institution; and others.

Articulated, Standards-based Curriculum

The College of Education at Idaho State University moved to a standards-based curriculum in 1997. The standards necessitated significant changes in the course offerings, instructional practices, and expectations of candidates. A new course, "Families, Community, and Cultures" was developed. This course serves as a pre-requisite to admission to the teacher education program. The College of Southern Idaho has also implemented a comparable course

to enable their candidates to meet the standards for admission to the College of Education upon transfer.

Idaho's technology competency requirement has been a major concern for students who transfer to four year programs. The College of Southern Idaho has developed and implemented a course which enables students to meet the goals of the technology competency prior to transfer to a four-year program. This course mirrors the one provided at Idaho State University. All transfer students meet the same technology requirements through the Idaho Technology Portfolio Assessment as other preservice and inservice teachers.

The College of Southern Idaho has also implemented a new course to assist students in preparing for transfer to any teacher preparation program. The "Education Exit Seminar" requires that students have a 2.75 grade point average (required for admission to teacher education at Idaho State University). In this course, the student completes an education portfolio demonstrating achievement of standards for admission to teacher education programs. In this manner, the student is able to demonstrate achievement of the specific standards for admission to teacher education programs and be eligible for immediate admission upon transfer.

Common Assessment Procedures

The use of portfolios to document the work of candidates in courses, field-based experiences, and technology is a common characteristic that permeates both the Idaho State University College of Education and the College of Southern Idaho. Students are required to present a portfolio that demonstrates their achievement of the standards for admission prior to their selection into the program. The faculty at the College of Southern Idaho have undertaken an extensive examination of their courses and experiences that provide the basis for the

development of the portfolio. Through the presentation of the portfolio, the candidate demonstrates the same levels of attainment as other candidates.

Resident faculty

The distance between Pocatello and Twin Falls is prohibitive for many students to commute. While buses do operate between the two campuses, travel on the bus adds significant hours to a student's day. Thus, the Dean of the College of Education determined that there were sufficient students to place a full-time faculty person on the College of Southern Idaho campus. This faculty member has been responsible for delivering the upper level courses required for completion of the program, advising candidates, supervising students in the field, collaborating on a daily basis with College of Southern Idaho faculty, and generally representing Idaho State University at the College of Southern Idaho. The placement of this person has also been supplemented by having faculty from Pocatello travel to Twin Falls on a weekly basis to deliver specific coursework. Other faculty on the Pocatello campus have delivered course work through the compressed video system. In addition, many of the faculty at the College of Southern Idaho have received affiliate faculty status from Idaho State University.

Placing four-year faculty on the two-year campus has provided the opportunity for students to gain the same experiences as students on the home campus. This has enabled a closer cooperation between those delivering the lower level courses and those delivering the upper level courses. The resident College of Education faculty serves as a member of the College of Southern Idaho advisory board. This enables policies and procedures which impacts student transfers to be thoroughly discussed prior to implementation. In addition, the chair of the Social Science and Education Department at the College of Southern Idaho serves

on the College of Education advisory board.

Presently, the College of Education is searching for a second faculty member to be resident on the College of Southern Idaho campus. The numbers of students admitted to the teacher education program has almost doubled over the past year. What once was seen as a way to complete a degree in a piecemeal fashion has now become a viable alternative for students who wish to complete a program in a timely and effective fashion.

Making cooperation and collaboration work

One of the interesting dimensions of making a collaborative and cooperative approach to the preparation of educators is the realization that it is not just aligning curriculum, using common assessments, or placing faculty from institution on the campus of another institution. Cooperation and collaboration are essentially driven by people and their willingness to want to work together to create an atmosphere that ultimately meets the needs of candidates and K-12 students. Several hallmark events have enabled this articulation between programs to become successful. The dean of the ISU College of Education and the CSI Vice President for Instruction began the discussion. The Vice President viewed the previous atmosphere at ISU to be one that was not friendly to transfer students. Knowing this, it was possible to develop a plan to make significant changes in atmosphere. The J.A. & Kathryn Albertson Foundation provided support for the eventual partnership by offering the community college the opportunity to apply for funding under the banner of recreating schools and colleges of education. The College of Southern Idaho developed a proposal that was shared with the College of Education. The support from Idaho State University ultimately led to the funding for the enhancing of the program at the College of Southern Idaho.

In order for programs of this nature to succeed, it is necessary to have open and honest

communication between all parties. Administrators and faculty from both institutions must meet together on a regular basis. Students from the community college must be seen as equal to the students on the home campus. The dean, other administrators, advisors, faculty, and others must make regular visits to the community college to assist in developing a sense of community with those students. Most importantly, all participants must agree that the same standards apply to students no matter their physical location.

While a single articulation program will not solve all of the problems being faced because of the looming shortage of teachers, the opportunity exists for this type of program to provide some solutions.

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